

BEFORE  
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
DOCKET NO. 95-1120-C - ORDER NO. 96-262  
JUNE 17, 1996

IN RE: Request of InVision Telecom, Inc.	)	ORDER
1150 Northmeadow Parkway, Roswell, GA	)	GRANTING
30076, for Waiver of COCOT Guidelines	)	WAIVER
Inconsistent with the Provision of	)	OF
Inmate Telephone Service.	)	GUIDELINES

On April 5, 1996, the request of InVision Telecom, Inc. ("InVision" or the "Company") for Certification to sell, vend, and install coin or coinless telephones in South Carolina was filed with the Commission. The Commission granted Certification to provide inmate telephone services in Docket No. 95-1120-C, Order No. 96-198, on March 18, 1996. InVision also requests the waiver of certain of our COCOT guidelines, which we have consistently granted in the past for those telephones providing inmate services. The Commission is of the opinion, and so finds, that the request for waiver of certain guidelines should be granted.

The Commission has imposed the following guidelines for certificated providers or individual owners of coin or coinless telephones:

- 1) Customer owned coin or coinless operated telephones connected to network must be in compliance with part 68 of the FCC Rules and Regulations. Customer is the certificated provider or individual owner of coin or coinless telephones.

- 2) The access line must be provided only by the Local Exchange Company. The Local Exchange Company will not furnish access lines without proof from the provider or owner that notification has been given to the South Carolina Public Service Commission and that they are certified to provide this service. The access line will be placed in the Certificate holder's name and cannot be connected behind a private branch exchange or any other private switching system.
- 3) The party owning the telephone will be responsible for payment of all charges billed to it by the Local Exchange Company.
- 4) The instrument must meet the following standards:
  - a) Hearing aid compatibility
  - b) National Electric Code
  - c) National Electric Safety Code
  - d) Accessibility to the handicapped in accordance with applicable statutory requirements

InVision, an inmate telephone service provider, has requested waiver of all Commission COCOT guidelines which are inconsistent with the provision of inmate telephone service. The waiver will include the changes outlined in the paragraphs that follow:

Confinement facilities typically request special blocking features in order to control fraud and harassment of members of the public by inmates. These facilities request that only automated collect calls are allowed; that calls to specific numbers be blocked; that certain calls be allowed free of charge; that call duration be limited; and that access to live operators, the carrier of choice or directory assistance be prohibited. Accordingly, the Commission guidelines prohibiting these restrictions would be waived.

Due to past difficulties with inmates abusing access to the Local Exchange Company and emergency services, InVision seeks exemption from rules requiring COCOTs to provide access to emergency services and the local operator. InVision is able to provide an alternative service to confinement facilities, by configuring its system in a manner which allows inmates to report emergencies to authorities within the facilities.

For security reasons, confinement facilities prefer to control what information, if any, is posted on the telephone. Since callers cannot reach a live operator, information regarding rates and complaint procedures typically is provided to the facility for distribution to inmates. Therefore the Commission's COCOT posting and operator disclosure requirements would be waived.

Because InVision's COCOT service is an automated, collect-only service offered only to inmates of correctional facilities, the waiver of this Commission's rule requiring that local and intraLATA calls be routed to the local exchange company's operator is included in this request. This will permit correctional facilities to contract with a single company for the provision of inmate service, and will prevent inmate access to LEC operators.

The Commission has examined the requested waiver from our guidelines as described above, and believes that they should be granted.

With regard to reporting requirements, all certified providers or individual owners of coin or coinless telephones must submit to the Commission an annual report, on or before April 1, for the following year, showing the following:

- A) Intrastate gross receipts (Certificated Interexchange Carriers who are also certified as a COCOT provider are exempt).
- B) Location of each station, and telephone number and rates charged for service.
- C) Total number of stations in use for the beginning and ending of the year.
- D) Profit and loss statement showing total receipts and total disbursements (Certificated Interexchange Carriers who are also certified as a COCOT provider are exempt).
- E) Total investment for the beginning and for the ending of the year.

An annual report will not be required where only one station is in use; however, if more stations are added, an annual report would be required to be filed with the Commission. Should the individual owner receiving a Certificate from the Commission subsequently cease operating its station or stations, notification should be given to the Commission of this within thirty (30) days of the close of station.

The provider or individual owner receiving certification from the Commission must furnish the Commission, within thirty (30) days after certification, a list of all COCOT access lines maintained in South Carolina. The list shall state the location and the telephone number. Failure to comply shall result in the revocation of certificate, unless an extension is requested and granted.

The provider or individual owner receiving certification from the Commission must furnish the Commission, within ten (10) days after certification, the person or persons with telephone numbers who can be contacted concerning complaints received by the Commission. This information shall be kept current at all times.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That the request by InVision for Waiver of all Commission COCOT guidelines inconsistent with the provision of inmate telephone service be, and hereby is, granted.

2. That InVision is hereby ordered to follow the guidelines set out hereinabove by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina.

3. That this Order remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

  
Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Executive Director

(SEAL)